

# The MOSAIC



## Naval Health Clinic Annapolis Newsletter for Diversity & Culture



Committed to Excellence Since 1845

1st QTR, FY 2016 Issue # 1

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### NHCA Multi-Cultural Committee (MCC) Quarterly Observances & Events:

Naval Health Clinic Annapolis  
Multicultural Committee Celebrates:

**NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH** OCT 2015

MY DISABILITY IS ONE PART OF WHO I AM.  
At work, it's what people can do that matters.

POC: HM2 Tyheria Phillipsoden - tyheria.s.phillipsoden.mil@mail.mil

\*See Page 3 for article

Naval Health Clinic Annapolis  
Multicultural Committee Celebrates:

**NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH**

Growing Native Leaders:  
Enhancing Our Seven Generations  
NOVEMBER 2015

Event: National American Indian Heritage Month  
Where: HP, Lockwood Heaton Conference Room  
When: Friday, November 20, 2015 @ 1200  
\*Transportation from BMU provided on event day\*\*

POC: HM2 Tyheria Phillipsoden - tyheria.s.phillipsoden.mil@mail.mil

\*See Page 4 for article

## Welcome to the Mosaic

Naval Health Clinic Annapolis is proud to display our diversity and heritage throughout the year. This quarterly newsletter engages our readers and promotes learning and growth, supplying a tool to stay current with what is happening in our Command's Diversity program. It displays articles to help enrich our readers lives, expanding their view of the world and its cultures. It encompasses the events that our Multi-Cultural

Committee showcases as they do an outstanding job of hosting observances to recognize the array of cultures, heritages and important historic occurrences throughout our nation's history. The Mosaic also highlights the Diversity program's annual outreach as they host bi-annual STEM events to reach out into the outlying communities and assist in educating students in the subjects of science, technology, engineering and math. These volunteer efforts enrich our

Command and community through education and support. The Command utilizes the Mosaic to broadcast and support all of these wonderful efforts. We are proud that our programs help embrace the unique cultures and rich diversity throughout our Command, the Navy, DOD and civilian communities we serve. We hope you enjoy this issue and gain a glimpse into our diversity and culture here at NHCA and also around the world.

## MCC Hispanic Heritage Month Event Recap

On Friday, September 25, 2015 the Naval Health Clinic Annapolis celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with a Multicultural event filled with music, dancing, history, tradition and a large variety of Latin cuisine from over five different countries.

The event took place within the Naval Health Clinic's Lockwood Heaton Conference room at Hospital Point, and as guests arrived they were greeted with a beautiful table display where they received their programs and were escorted through an entrance corridor lined with 20 flags hanging from the ceiling, each representing one country of Hispanic origin in the world today. The jovial sounds of Latin music poured from the conference room and the music grew louder as 125 guests filled the conference room to watch the event.

The presentation opened with a brief introduction from the clinic's Commanding Officer, Captain Michael McGinnis, as he welcomed all the guests in attendance and presented important facts about how crucial the Latino community is to our nation and the Navy. Master of Ceremonies, HM3 Stewart, continued the event as he described the importance of this month and laid out the celebration that was about to unfold. A short intro video was played displaying how proud Latino Americans are to be part of the United States and be a representative of their home countries. PSSN Martinez followed the video as he did an outstanding job presenting the Navy's message for this month and HM2 Garganta followed suit with the Presidential Proclamation.

HM3 Resendez was brought up as a narrator for the next portion of the event as the audience watched members of Kasandra's Cultural Center, both children and adults, line the center of the room in preparation to dance. 18 volunteers from the cultural center performed five dances (Cumbia, La Plena, La Bomba, Son de la Negra, and Jarabe Tapatio) representing the history and tradition of 3 Latin American countries (Colombia, Puerto Rico, and Mexico). The music and dance was exciting and beautiful as the dancers quickly changed outfits between each dance. HM3 Resendez gave a historic and traditional caption to each dance prior to it being performed. The dancers ended with a big applause and the room was filled with happiness and excitement.



## MCC Hispanic Heritage Month Event Recap Continued...



As the presentation came to an end Sandra Oblitas, Director of the cultural center, was called upfront and presented a Letter of Appreciation from the Commanding Officer, CAPT McGinnis, for her voluntary efforts in support of the Command. Her comments after receiving the award were inspiring. She spoke of how the cultural center was so proud to be able to perform at such a prestigious place as the Naval Health Clinic in Annapolis. She made mention to the lasting effect that this day will have, not only on herself, but also the children. She stated that someday, because of this experience, these children may choose to pursue the Navy now that they have had the experience of witnessing it's unique culture first hand.

Following Senora Oblitas comments the event closed as HM3 Steward finished with a quote from Roberto Clemente and as the room once again filled with the sounds of Latino music the guests exited to the food and live music awaiting them outside.

More than 10 authentic Latin dishes were served along with deserts, sides and cultural drinks. As guests made their way through the food line they could hear the sounds of live music filling the hall as Joe Falero and the DC Latin All-stars performed and as guests finished eating they made their way to the dance floor to continue the celebration.

The Multicultural Committee and its leadership did an amazing job representing the Hispanic Culture with September's celebration and it will be an event that will be remembered for a long time.

Written by: HM1(FMF) Michael Weaver, NHCA Asst. Diversity Officer

## October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

In October, Americans observe National Disability Employment Awareness Month by paying tribute to the accomplishments of the men and women with disabilities whose work helps keep the nation's economy strong and by reaffirming their commitment to ensure equal opportunity for all citizens.

This effort to educate the public about the issues related to disability and employment began in 1945, when Congress enacted Public Law 176, declaring the first week of October each year as National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week. In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. Some 25 years later, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

Continued on page 4

**My disability is one part of who I am.**  
At work, it's what people can do that matters.

**National Disability Employment Awareness Month** — Celebrating 70 Years!

**2015 goal for Operation PAVE (Paving Access to Veterans Employment):**  
**PLACING ONE VETERAN, CAREGIVER, OR FAMILY MEMBER IN A JOB OPPORTUNITY PER DAY IN 2015.**

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

[OPERATIONPAVE.ORG](http://OPERATIONPAVE.ORG)



## National Disability Employment Awareness Month Cont.

Held each October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is a time to celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. The theme for this year – which marks 70 years since the first observance – is "My Disability is One Part of Who I Am."

Naval Health Clinic Annapolis Multi-Cultural Committee has observed (NDEAM) throughout October by displaying posters and spreading information across the Command, on it's Facebook page and throughout it's web pages. Email blasts and "Plan of the Week" posts were dispersed throughout the Command as information tools to bring awareness to the importance of this month both in the military and throughout our communities.

For additional details visit the [Office of Disability Employment Policy Website](#).

## National Native American Indian Heritage Month

For almost one hundred years, Americans both Indian and non-Indian have urged that there be permanently designated by the nation a special place on the calendar to honor the contributions, achievements, sacrifices, and cultural and historical legacy of the original inhabitants of what is now the United States and their descendants: the American Indian and Alaska Native people.

The quest for a national honoring of Native Americans began in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century as a private effort. As far back as the late 1970s, Congress has enacted legislation and subsequent presidents have issued annual proclamations designating a day, a week or a month to celebrate and commemorate the nation's American Indian and Alaska Native heritage. In 2009, Congress passed and the President signed legislation that established the Friday immediately following Thanksgiving Day of each year as "Native American Heritage Day."

On Friday, 20 November 2015 at 1200 Naval Health Clinic Annapolis Multi-Cultural Committee will be hosting an event to celebrate National Native American Indian Heritage Month. The event will take place in the Lockwood Heaton Conference Room and will showcase the unique cultures and contributions that American Indians have made to our nation and the world.



Click the images below, or the following links, to expand the view or download a PDF: [National Native American Heritage Month Timeline](#) and [National Native American Heritage Month Facts & Figures](#).

**Timeline**

1492 Ponce de Leon discovers Florida, the first European to set foot on the continent.

1498 Spanish explorer Christopher Columbus reaches the Americas, claiming the continent for Spain.

1500 Spanish explorer Vasco Núñez Balboa reaches the Pacific Ocean, the first European to do so.

1519 First North American Indian expedition is established in New Spain.

1774 Declaration of Independence is signed by 56 delegates to the Continental Congress.

1776 U.S. rights first written into the Declaration of Independence.

1804-1805 Lewis and Clark expedition crosses the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

1805 President Thomas Jefferson signs the Louisiana Purchase, doubling the size of the United States.

1847 Indian Citizenship Act grants citizenship to Native Americans who were born in the United States.

1850 The Chinese Exclusion Act is passed, the first U.S. immigration law to restrict immigration on an ethnic basis.

1869 The Homestead Act is passed, providing 160 acres of land to settlers for a small fee.

1870 The Dawes Act is passed, providing for the allotment of land to individual Native Americans.

1871 John G. Neihart and his party are the first to reach the summit of Mount McKinley in 1897.

1876 New York becomes the first state to publicly recognize Indian Day.

1882 Indian Citizenship Act grants citizenship to all Native Americans born in the U.S.

1924 Indian Reorganization Act is passed, providing for the self-government of Native American tribes.

**Facts & Figures**

**POPULATION**

**2013**  
 2.7 million (1st year) or 0.8% of total population  
 0.8 million (1st year) or 0.2% of total population

**2060\***  
 4.3 million (1st year) or 1.3% of total population  
 1.5 million (1st year) or 0.4% of total population

**Where Do They Live?**

There are 54 states with more than 100,000 American Indian and Alaska Native residents, including 40% of the total population as of 2013.

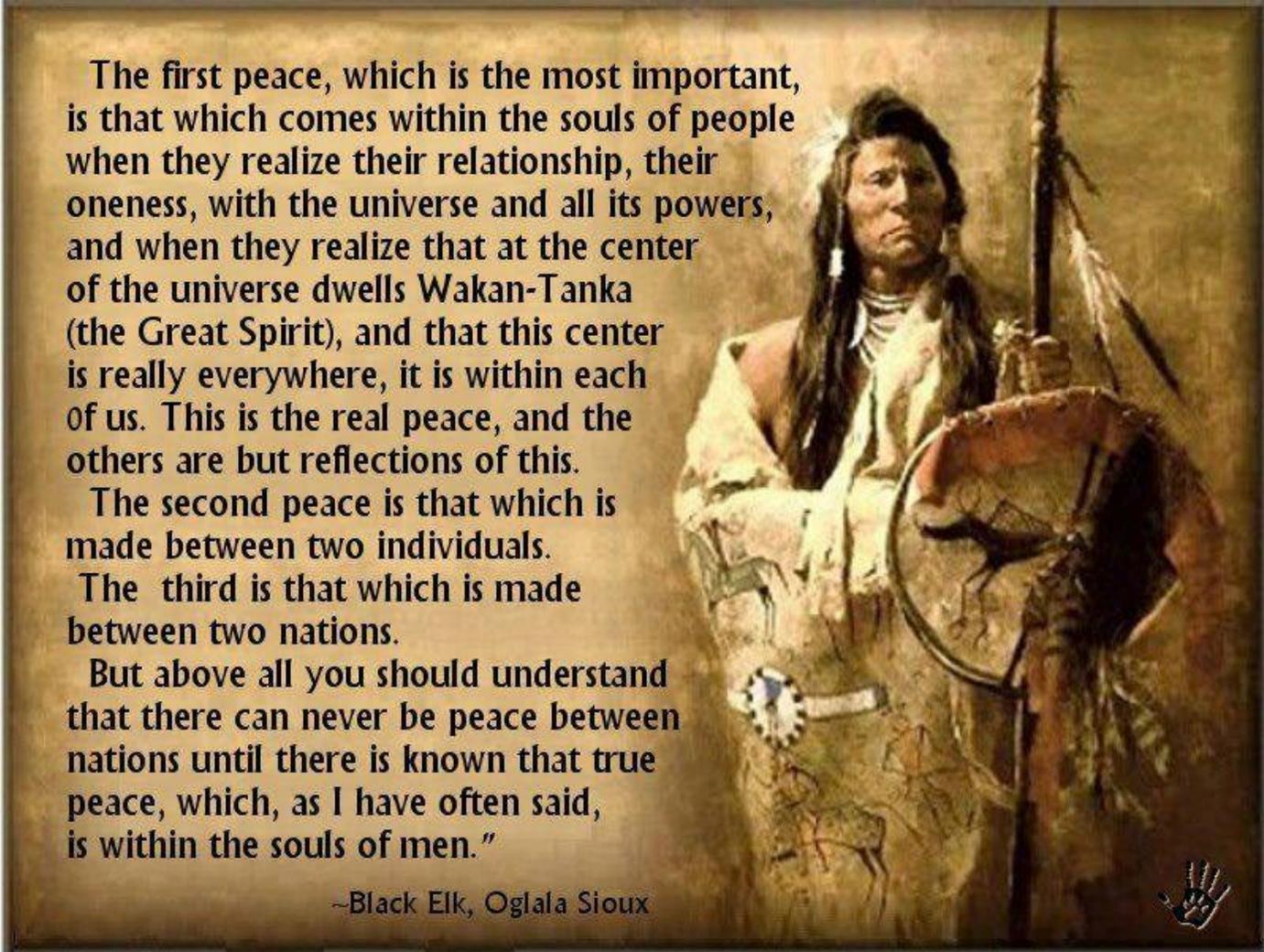
**Most Populous Tribes**  
 (including several of those in Alaska)

Cherokee	1,110,000
Navajo	300,000
Crow	100,000
Stonewall	200,000
Chickasaw	100,000
Choctaw	100,000
Blackfoot	100,000
Shoshone	100,000
Sioux	100,000
Yukon-Koyuk	100,000
Yupik	100,000

**Median Age**

American Indian	35.4
Latino	30.1
White	38.1
Asian	36.3
Black	25.8
All Population	37.8

**Number of Federally Recognized Indian Tribes** 566  
**Number of Federally Recognized Indian Reservations** 288



The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness, with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the universe dwells Wakan-Tanka (the Great Spirit), and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us. This is the real peace, and the others are but reflections of this.

The second peace is that which is made between two individuals.

The third is that which is made between two nations.

But above all you should understand that there can never be peace between nations until there is known that true peace, which, as I have often said, is within the souls of men."

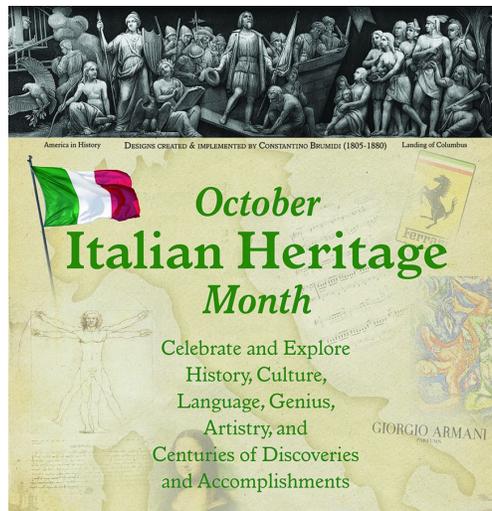
~Black Elk, Oglala Sioux



## Italian American Heritage Month

Every year the U.S. president signs an executive order designating the month of October as National Italian American Heritage Month. Coinciding with the festivities surrounding Columbus Day, the proclamation is recognition of the many achievements, contributions, and successes of Americans of Italian descent as well as Italians in America.

Over 5.4 million Italians immigrated to the United States between 1820 and 1992. Today there are over 26 million Americans of Italian descent in the United States, making them the fifth largest ethnic group. The country was even named after an Italian, the explorer and geographer Amerigo Vespucci.



## History of Columbus Day



Columbus Day is a U.S. holiday that commemorates the landing of Christopher Columbus in the New World on October 12, 1492. It was unofficially celebrated in a number of cities and states as early as the 18th century but did not become a federal holiday until the 1937. For many, the holiday is a way of both honoring Columbus' achievements and celebrating Italian-American heritage. Throughout its history, Columbus Day and the man who inspired it have generated controversy, and many alternatives to the holiday have appeared in recent years.

The first Columbus Day celebration took place in 1792, when New York's Columbian Order—better known as Tammany Hall—held an event to commemorate the historic landing's 300th anniversary. Taking pride in Columbus' birthplace and faith, Italian and Catholic communities in various parts of the country began organizing annual religious ceremonies and parades in his honor. In 1892, President Benjamin Harrison issued a proclamation encouraging Americans to mark the 400th anniversary of Columbus' voyage with patriotic festivities, writing, "On that day let the people, so far as possible, cease from toil and devote themselves to such exercises as may best express honor to the discoverer and their appreciation of the great achievements of the four completed centuries of American life."

In 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed Columbus Day a national holiday, largely as a result of intense lobbying by the Knights of Columbus, an influential Catholic fraternal benefits organization. Originally observed every October 12, it was fixed to the second Monday in October in 1971.



## German American Heritage Day

President Ronald Reagan first proclaimed October 6, 1983 as German American Heritage Day, and it was officially commemorated four years later in 1987. This day honors the 300th anniversary of the arrival of 13 German families who established the first German settlement on American soil. This community on the northern outskirts of Philadelphia later came to be known as Germantown.



President Reagan's 1987 proclamation read:

**National German-American Day** October 6  
 "The United States has embraced a vast array of German traditions, institutions, and influences... Christmas trees and Broadway musicals are familiar features of American society. Our kindergartens, graduate schools, the social security system, and labor unions are all based on models derived from Germany. German teachers, musicians, and enthusiastic amateurs have left an indelible imprint on classical music, hymns, choral singing, and marching bands in our country. In architecture and design, German contributions include the modern suspension bridge, Bauhaus, and Jugendstil. German-American scientists have helped make the United States the world's pioneer in research and technology."

Some notable Americans of German descent include: Dwight Eisenhower, Albert Einstein, Henry Kissinger, Hannah Arendt, Kurt Vonnegut, Sylvia Plath, Fred Astaire and Lou Gehrig.

## Polish American Heritage Month

Since 1608, when the first Polish settlers arrived at Jamestown, VA, Polish people have been an important part of America's history and culture. In 2015, Polish Americans will mark the 34th Anniversary of the founding of Polish American Heritage Month, an event, which began in Philadelphia, PA, and became a national celebration of Polish history, culture and pride. During 2015, Poles will mark the 407th Anniversary of the First Polish Settlers who were among the first skilled workers in America.





## NOW: National Organization For Women

The National Organization for Women Foundation (“NOW Foundation”) is an organization devoted to achieving full equality for women through education and litigation. A well known campaign is through their “Love Your Body Campaign” which is aimed at young women. This campaign encourage discussions towards body image and healthy living and draw attention to objectification of women’s bodies.

The Foundation focuses on a broad range of women’s rights issues, including economic justice, pay equity, racial discrimination, women’s health and body image, women with disabilities, reproductive rights and justice, family law, marriage and family formation rights of same-sex couples, representation of women in the media, and global feminist issues.

The NOW Foundation is affiliated with the National Organization for Women, the largest feminist grassroots organization in the U.S., with hundreds of chapters in all 50 states and the District of Columbia and hundreds of thousands of contributing members and supporters.

For more information go to: <http://now.org/>

*“Trick or treat?” The “trick” part of “trick or treat” is a threat to play a trick on the homeowner or his property if no treat is given.*



## The History of Halloween

Halloween is a time of celebration and superstition. Halloween is a holiday celebrated on the night of October 31. The word Halloween is a shortening of All Hallows’ Evening also known as Hallowe’en or All Hallows’ Eve. Halloween has its origins in the ancient Celtic festival known as Samhain (pronounced “sah-win”). The festival of Samhain is a celebration of the end of the harvest season in Gaelic culture. Samhain was a time used by the ancient pagans to take stock of supplies and prepare for winter. The ancient Gaels believed that on October 31, the boundaries between the worlds of the living and the dead overlapped and the deceased would come back to life and cause havoc such as sickness or damaged crops. The festival would frequently involve bonfires. It is believed that the fires attracted insects to the area which attracted bats to the area. These are additional attributes of the history of Halloween. Masks and costumes were worn in an attempt to mimic the evil spirits or appease them.

Trick-or-treating, is an activity for children on or around Halloween in which they proceed from house to house in costumes, asking for treats such as confectionery with the question, “Trick or treat?” The “trick” part of “trick or treat” is a threat to play a trick on the homeowner or his property if no treat is given. Trick-or-treating is one of the main traditions of Halloween. It has become socially expected that if one lives in a neighborhood with children one should purchase treats in preparation for trick-or-treaters. Trick-or-treating spread from the western United States eastward, stalled by sugar rationing that began in April 1942 during World War II and did not end until June 1947.

The history of Halloween has evolved. The practice of dressing up in costumes and begging door to door for treats on holidays goes back to the Middle Ages, and includes Christmas wassailing. Trick-or-treating resembles the late medieval practice of “souling,” when poor folk would go door to door on Hallowmas (November 1), receiving food in return for prayers for the dead on All Souls Day (November 2). It originated in Ireland and Britain, although similar practices for the souls of the dead were found as far south as Italy. Shakespeare mentions the practice in his comedy The Two Gentlemen of Verona (1593), when Speed accuses his master of “puling [whimpering, whining], like a beggar at Hallowmas.” Now you know the history of Halloween so go out there and have fun! The ghouls and goblins will be right beside you.

## Distinguished Alumna Shares Her Knowledge of Health Sciences Careers

More than 30 members of the Health Professionals Affinity Community (HPAC) were treated to a visit today by CAPT Colleen Gallagher NC USN, a 1982 graduate and Distinguished Alumna. CAPT Gallagher was at Saint Joseph's Academy (SJA) as part of the Grand Reunion weekend of activities that included a gathering of the school's Distinguished Alumnae.

She took time from her busy schedule as a member of the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps and Family Nurse Practitioner at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., to help guide students interested in health sciences careers. Her discussion was arranged by her niece, Kelly Gallagher '09, the Health Science Honors Program Coordinator.

HPAC is designed to engage students and advance their academic and career progress toward health professions. The program relies on existing community assets and bundling them in a manner that further supports student success. Students benefit from opportunities to apply academic learning in real-world circumstances and learn how to employ existing community resources to improve their community.

"I knew when I was here as a student that I wanted to be a nurse," shared CAPT Gallagher. "I earned my nursing degree at Villanova University and soon after that joined the Navy. I figured that I would be in for three years, enjoying the travel and being able to work anywhere, and then have the opportunity at any number of nursing jobs when I left."

Nearly 30 years later, CAPT Gallagher is still serving in the Navy and has indeed traveled the world, working with patients, training, earning a Master degree in Public Health and a Master degree in Science in Nursing. She's worked in Haiti after that country's massive earthquake, helped on an archaeological dig in Vietnam looking for the remains of soldiers missing in action, worked in the public health field in Hawaii, and been stationed at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, helping refugees, as well as soldiers.

"There are so many opportunities out there beyond nursing and medical school," she related. "You are able to work in laboratories, in public health, epidemiology, nutrition - basically whatever is your passion."

"I love nursing because I love working with people. I enjoy the 'thinking' part of the profession, too," said CAPT Gallagher. "There are spiritual, psychological and scientific aspects to nursing. I really like that."

<http://www.sja1890.org/page/News-Detail?pk=782827&fromId=192289>



CAPT Gallagher and two current SJA students.

*"I knew when I was here as a student that I wanted to be a nurse."*



## NHCA STEM Outreach, Medical & Dental Showcase at Annapolis Elementary

This December the Diversity Council at Naval Health Clinic Annapolis will be traveling to Annapolis Elementary School to conduct their bi-annual Medical and Dental STEM Outreach Showcase. This showcase will include several departments from the health clinic and will help to showcase the scientific and technology attributes found in medicine. Departments such as Radiology, Lab, Optometry, Orthopedic, Physical Therapy, and Dental showcase themselves as the diversity team and clinic staff educate students in different departmental specific areas. The students are educated on things such as basic cell identification under a microscope, identifying bones of the human body and the technology and physics of how x-rays are made, eyes exams and how the eyes function, and proper dental hygiene, brushing and flossing techniques.

Each of these areas help to give the students a broad scope of medicine and how it can help others through the application of STEM principles.



Annapolis Elementary School

## The History of Thanksgiving



The tradition of the Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving is steeped in myth and legend. Few people realize that the Pilgrims did not celebrate Thanksgiving the next year, or any year thereafter, though some of their descendants later made a "Forefather's Day" that usually occurred on December 21 or 22. Several Presidents, including George Washington, made one-time Thanksgiving holidays. In 1827, Mrs. Sarah Josepha Hale began lobbying several Presidents for the creation of Thanksgiving as a national holiday, but her lobbying was unsuccessful until 1863 when Abraham Lincoln finally made it a national holiday.

Today, our Thanksgiving is the fourth Thursday of November. This was set by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1939 (approved by Congress in 1941), who changed it from Abraham Lincoln's designation as the *last* Thursday in November (which could occasionally end up being the fifth Thursday, and hence too close to Christmas for businesses). But the Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving began at some unknown date between September 21 and November 9, most likely in very early October. The date of Thanksgiving was probably set by Lincoln to somewhat correlate with the anchoring of the *Mayflower* at Cape Cod, which occurred on November 21, 1620 (by our modern Gregorian calendar--it was November 11 to the Pilgrims who used the Julian calendar).

There are only two contemporary accounts of the 1621 Thanksgiving: First is Edward Winslow's account, which he wrote in a letter dated December 12, 1621. The complete letter was first published in 1622.

Our corn [i.e. wheat] did prove well, and God be praised, we had a good increase of Indian corn, and our barley indifferent good, but our peas not worth the gathering, for we feared they were too late sown. They came up very well, and blossomed, but the sun parched them in the blossom. Our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after a special manner rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors. They four in one day killed as much fowl as, with a little help beside, served the company almost a week. At which time, amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought to the plantation and bestowed on our governor, and upon the captain and others. And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want that we often wish you partakers of our plenty.

The second description was written about twenty years after the fact by William Bradford in his *History Of Plymouth Plantation*. Bradford's *History* was rediscovered in 1854 after having been taken by British looters during the Revolutionary War. Its discovery prompted a greater American interest in the history of the Pilgrims. It is also in this account that the Thanksgiving turkey tradition is founded.

They began now to gather in the small harvest they had, and to fit up their houses and dwellings against winter, being all well recovered in health and strength and had all things in good plenty. For as some were thus employed in affairs abroad, others were exercising in fishing, about cod and bass and other fish, of which they took good store, of which every family had their portion. All the summer there was no want; and now began to come in store of fowl, as winter approached, of which this place did abound when they came first (but afterward decreased by degrees). And besides waterfowl there was great store of wild turkeys, of which they took many, besides venison, etc. Besides they had about a peck of meal a week to a person, or now since harvest, Indian corn to that proportion. Which made many afterwards write so largely of their plenty here to their friends in England, which were not feigned but true reports.



Continued on page 11

## The History of Thanksgiving Cont.

The primary sources above only list a few items that were on the Thanksgiving "menu", namely five deer, a large number of turkeys and waterfowl, cod, and bass; plus the harvest, which consisted of wheat, corn, barley, and perhaps any peas that survived the scorching. To that list, we can probably add a few additional things that are known to have been native to the area and eaten by the Pilgrims: clams, mussels, lobster, eel, ground nuts, acorns, walnuts, chestnuts, squashes, and beans. Fruits and berries such as strawberries, raspberries, grapes, and gooseberries were available growing wild. Pilgrim house-gardens may have included a number of English vegetables and herbs, perhaps things like onions, leeks, sorrel, yarrow, lettuce, carrots, radishes, currants, liverwort, watercress, and others. It is unlikely much in the way of supplies brought on the *Mayflower* survived, such as Holland Cheese, olive oil, butter, salt pork, sugar, spices, lemons, beer, aqua-vitae, or bacon. It appears the Pilgrims may have had some chickens with them, so likely had access to a limited number of eggs. No mention of swine is found in any account of the first year. They did not yet have any goats or cattle: the first of those arrived on the ship *Anne* in 1623.

The "Popcorn Myth" would have us believe the Indians introduced the Pilgrims to popcorn at this Thanksgiving; but the Indian corn they grew was Northern Flint, which does not pop well. It was parched to make a simple snack, and the Indians sometimes ground it up and mixed it with strawberries for a cake-like desert. Potatoes and sweet potatoes had not yet been introduced to New England.



## Hanukkah December 6-14

Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights, commemorates the Maccabees military victory over the Greek Syrians and the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. The festival is observed by the lighting of a special candelabrum, the Menorah, with one additional light lit on each night of the holiday, progressing to eight on the final night.



## Christmas December 25

Christmas is an annual holiday celebrated on December 25 that commemorates the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. In Christianity, Christmas marks the beginning of the larger season of Christmastide, which lasts twelve days. Traditions include the sending of cards, decorating with poinsettias and a Christmas tree, singing Christmas carols, and giving gifts.



## Kwanzaa December 26-January 1

Kwanzaa is an African-American holiday based on the agricultural celebration of Africa called "the first fruits" celebrations, which celebrate the times of harvest, gathering, reverence, commemoration of the past, recommitment to cultural ideals, and celebration of the good. Kwanzaa is celebrated annually December 26-January 1.



## History of New Years Eve December 31

The celebration of the new year is the oldest of all holidays. It was first observed in ancient Babylon about 4000 years ago. In the years around 2000 BC, the Babylonian New Year began with the first New Moon (actually the first visible crescent) after the Vernal Equinox (first day of spring). The beginning of spring is a logical time to start a new year. After all, it is the season of rebirth, of planting new crops, and of blossoming. January 1, on the other hand, has no astronomical nor agricultural significance. It is purely arbitrary.



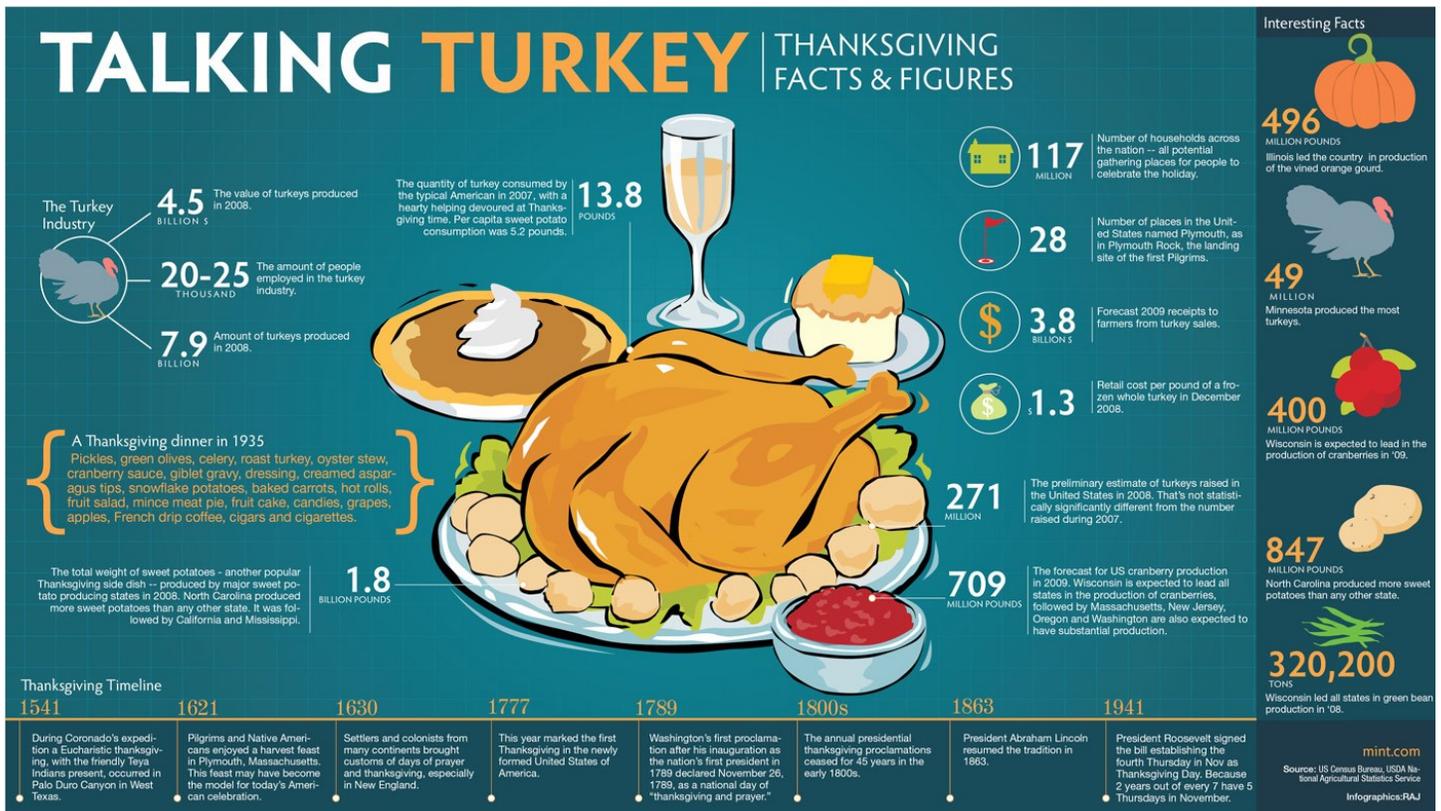
Continued on page 12

## History of New Years Eve Cont. December 31

The Babylonian new year celebration lasted for eleven days. Each day had its own particular mode of celebration, but it is safe to say that modern New Year's Eve festivities pale in comparison. The Romans continued to observe the new year in late March, but their calendar was continually tampered with by various emperors so that the calendar soon became out of synchronization with the sun. In order to set the calendar right, the Roman senate, in 153 BC, declared January 1 to be the beginning of the new year. But tampering continued until Julius Caesar, in 46 BC, established what has come to be known as the Julian Calendar. It again established January 1 as the new year. But in order to synchronize the calendar with the sun, Caesar had to let the previous year drag on for 445 days.

Although in the first centuries AD the Romans continued celebrating the new year, the early Catholic Church condemned the festivities as paganism. But as Christianity became more widespread, the early church began having its own religious observances concurrently with many of the pagan celebrations, and New Year's Day was no different. New Year's is still observed as the Feast of Christ's Circumcision by some denominations. During the Middle Ages, the Church remained opposed to celebrating New Years. January 1 has been celebrated as a holiday by Western nations for only about the past 400 years.

New Year's Eve is December 31, the final day of the Gregorian year and the day before New Year's Day. In modern Western practice, New Year's Eve is celebrated with parties and social gatherings marking the passing of one year into the next, at midnight.



The Mosaic Newsletter is always looking for articles. If you are interested in providing an article please contact:

HM1 Weaver: [michael.e.weaver42.mil@mail.mil](mailto:michael.e.weaver42.mil@mail.mil)